Traci Burk: After Birth

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IN THIS EPISODE

Traci Burk returns to Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC eleven days after giving birth to tell the rest of the story. After a pregnancy full of false alarms and a due date that came and went, a mini dose of castor oil at 41 weeks sets off a whirlwind: contractions that escalate on the 48-minute drive to Cedars-Sinai, red lights, and a car too tall for the hospital parking garage.

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DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Welcome back to the Informed Pregnancy Podcast. I'm your host, pregnancy-focused chiropractor Dr. Elliott Berland, and we are back with the rest of the story, a before and after birth story with Tracy Burke. Welcome back to the podcast.

TRACI BURK: Thank you so much for having me.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh my gosh. Okay. There's so many things going on here. Last time I talked to you was not that long ago. You were pregnant and you already had a toddler and your pregnancy wasn't the most straightforward. So if we could recap, your first birth went pretty great, I think. You went to the hospital, you labored for quite a bit. Unmedicated, you got your epidural and got some rest and had pretty uncomplicated pushing and postpartum. And then this time you're like, well, maybe I can do that at home. And then so many twists and turns throughout the pregnancy and false positives, really. And then shiny spot on the ultrasounds. And you're like, you know what, let's get a

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: doula and do this at the hospital. And then this was my next time talking to you.

TRACI BURK: Yes. Lots has changed since then. Yeah. I think when we chatted, I was, was it a week before my due date? I think so. Yes. I think I saw you for my last chiropractor session right at 39 weeks or like the day before. And then in my head, I thought that it was going to happen like any day. With it being a second pregnancy, I figured it would be sooner than the due date. I had my parents fly

out from Canada to help out with my toddler and was just waiting to go into labor. Didn't make any plans because I figured like each day was that was going to be the day, but did not end up happening like that. I tried everything to kind of naturally induce. I think I did like every food you can imagine that's

TRACI BURK: recommended. I did. So I did this salad from the coyote pizza, which I had also tried with my first son. And then I did eggplant dish in the south bay that was recommended spicy. It wasn't spicy. It was like an eggplant parmesan. Okay. I did balsamic vinaigrette. I didn't spicy foods. I did dates, the raspberry leaf tea. So all the foods I was doing like yoga to induce labor. I had saw you prior. Not that that was really for inducing, but I ended up doing acupuncture. I went for a few prenatal massages. I was doing curb walking date nights with my husband, like anything to build oxytocin, pretty much everything you can imagine, but end up going past the due date. And in the meantime, my OB was really pushing for

TRACI BURK: an induction before 39 weeks. Actually, they were wanting to induce me at 39 weeks, which I was really against.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Why 39 weeks? Because last time you went over 40, right?

TRACI BURK: Yeah, last time I went over 40. And if I recall correctly last time, they also wanted to induce me early too. But the reason is just because of some research that came out a few years ago, apparently that they say better outcomes for babies born at 39 weeks versus going to the due date or after.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, so nothing specific to you or your baby?

TRACI BURK: Nothing really specific to me, no. So I was going in every three days for monitoring just to make sure everything was fine since I wasn't kind of putting off the induction. So there was a point where my fluid was a little bit low, but I went back the next day, ultra hydrated overnight and my fluid had doubled. So I guess that really fluctuates based off how much, yeah, how much you're drinking.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, I mean, it fluctuates throughout the day anyway. Yeah. And the number you see is the minimum amount of fluid that you have. Sometimes there are pockets that are hiding.

TRACI BURK: Yeah. Yeah. So that happened a couple times where my fluid was a little bit low, where they were like, we really should be scheduling your induction. But I would come back the next day and it was like doubled and perfectly fine. And then the further along we got, they were also saying the baby was measuring like upper eight pounds, like pretty big for me. So that was another reason too. And then just aging placenta, they were saying like after 39, 40 weeks, the placenta can kind of become less efficient. Although there was nothing really on the ultrasound showing that the blood flow is fine. The baby was like thriving from the ultrasounds. And speaking with my doula along the way too, she kind of, you know, shared

TRACI BURK: me that none of these things are emergencies or reasons that really need to be induced. So I held off and did not schedule or had an induction scheduled for I think it was 41 and a

half weeks, which is a lot further out than my OB had wanted, but I had it on the calendar.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I think you should have for date night with your husband, you should have gone to Las Vegas, back to the pool where it all started.

TRACI BURK: We should have. The big romance. Yes. So I think actually the day before I went into labor, at that point, it was a mind game for me. I had my parents here for a week and a half at this point. They were only coming for three weeks to help out with the baby. And my intention for them to come was to arrive right before the baby was born and then be here to help out with my toddler and everything while I'm in the early postpartum. So time was really ticking. The day before I went into labor, we actually went to pumpkin patch with my son and like my whole family. And then we just did like a fall day. We went on a tractor ride. So I was really hoping like that.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, bumping up and down maybe.

TRACI BURK: Yeah, and it was about an hour and a half from where we live. It was a little bit far, but nothing happened that day. Oh, and I should say also too, that at each of my appointments, I had put off being checked until I think I was at 40 weeks. And then I was checked that that day and I was two centimeters dilated and cervix was pretty soft. Only need to go. Yeah, and then she checked me again a few days later and I was still two centimeters dilated, soft cervix. And at that point, I did a membrane sweep. At both those checks, I did a membrane sweep. So I ended up doing three membrane sweeps in total. Those didn't really seem to do anything and they were not uncomfortable for me at all. So I don't know if they were just done

TRACI BURK: very conservatively because I've heard that it can be really uncomfortable, but they just felt like the same as cervical check to me. And so I did do that as well. And so far, it just seemed like nothing was working and it was stressing me out. And then finally, when I was 41 weeks, exactly a week past the due date, that was three days before the scheduled induction. I kind of was going into panic mode and I decided to try castor oil.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh wow, you went all out.

TRACI BURK: So I went to four different places. They were sold out. Finally found the very last bottle at CVS in the children's section, a tiny little bottle. And I looked up like the midwives brew recipe online and made a smoothie.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, with like orange juice and stuff?

TRACI BURK: Yeah, so it was actually pineapple juice, lemon tea, almond butter. And then I did a very mini dose of the castor oil. So I was reading mixed reviews. Like I was reading anywhere between one to four tablespoons of castor oil. I did about three quarters of a tablespoon blended in two, so it was a very mini dose. I was scared. I was a little bit worried about the side effects that I had read of possible, you know, the nausea.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Diarrhea?

TRACI BURK: Diarrhea, vomiting, which did not sound fun. So I was timid with it. Just did three quarters of a tablespoon. Blend it all together. This was in the morning around 11 a.m. I drank half the

smoothie. And then I went for a curb walk around the block for about 30 minutes. Didn't feel anything. Came back home and drank the rest of the smoothie and just kind of closed it up and started watching a movie. About an hour later, I started feeling some like pains in my stomach. And in my head I'm like, oh, this is gonna give me like, you know, nausea or diarrhea or something. So they were pretty mild, but I thought it was completely just digestive pains. After about 30 minutes, I realized that they were kind of like coming and going.

TRACI BURK: Like it wasn't constant. And I was feeling my stomach tighten. So I started timing them on my contraction timer app. And they were coming about every three minutes for about a minute long.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And then- Oh, wow. Wait, where did you feel them?

TRACI BURK: In my like lower abdomen.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: In your belly?

TRACI BURK: In my belly.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So was that reminiscent of contractions you had last time?

TRACI BURK: No. So last time my contractions were purely from the pitocin and they were so intense. They were like stabbing pains, also in my belly, but like my whole core. And they were just a lot more intense. So I was confused thinking like it could be in digestion because of the castor oil was what I was thinking. So I'm timing them about 10 minutes later, they start becoming like two and a half minutes and then two minutes and they're progressively like shorter and shorter. So I'm messaging my doula, sending her screenshots and I don't think I'd even told her I'd done the castor oil but I was telling her like, I'm not sure if it's just like gas or digestion or if it's contractions. And I think she was thinking like, let's wait

TRACI BURK: because she knew I didn't want to be at the hospital for too long, laboring beforehand.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But you do live not that close to the hospital. Yeah, they live about like 45, 50 minutes. It was a Saturday, which is not too bad for traffic.

TRACI BURK: Did you think about going to the office? I did. So that was my backup plan. So you were my kind of saving grace. I'm like, if I go to the hospital and find out that I'm still only two centimeters, we'll go to Dr. Berlin's, I'll message you and that will be what we'll do instead of coming all the way back home. So that was actually my plan. The doula was aware of that. My husband, I think he thought, oh, it's probably just the castor oil. We were all like very chill. My toddler kept coming into the room and like talking to me. I was like completely talking through every contraction. It kept popping up on the app saying, go to the hospital now.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You know you live far away that didn't make you nervous?

TRACI BURK: No, because I was like completely not very uncomfortable. Yeah. When I was thinking about my last labor, like I could not speak through those. It was so intense. Like I was. like blacking out through the contractions these were so different like very mild i have one question before

we take a quick break okay what movie honestly i don't even remember it was like a silly comedy i don't remember the name of it okay silly i'll just say what genre comedy it was

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: like a romantic comedy were you laughing now not really i wasn't really focused on timing everything it was just like background noise all right let's take a quick break we can four times and brand b four times welcome back we're talking to second time new mama tracy burke how old is the baby by the way baby is 11 days old now 11 days wow you have more energy than i'll ever have and you have an 11 day old and a toddler okay so things are heating up you're 41 weeks and just less than two weeks ago and you have a conservative castor oil cocktail go for a 30 minute curb walk start having surges in your belly they're getting closer and closer together the app is telling you go to the hospital and you're just like

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: no these are too comfortable i can't be ready yet what happens next yes oh and i should also

TRACI BURK: mention throughout the week and a half prior i had been losing like bits of my niggas plug for about a week and a half which i know regenerate it doesn't really mean a whole lot so i've been happening for about a week and a half and then that day as i'm getting like the cramping and kind of tried me everything i had a little bit of bloody show so i think that was when my deal was like okay let's meet the hospital so that kind of was like the cue that okay this is maybe really happening i tell my husband he starts loading up the car with our bags and my birthing ball we're planning for you know the long haul i have like a massive suitcase his bag with the ball and our snacks

TRACI BURK: and all that he's packing up we load everything up say goodbye my toddler get in the car i'm still feeling like not too bad i'm kind of just really worried that we're gonna show up way too early oh still you're worried about that and your parents are at your house with your toddler yeah okay yeah so that was not stressful at all we were leaving him in good hands so as soon as we get in the car things really dialed up i mean my contractions started feeling like real contractions i was still like sitting on the seat buckled in but i had to like kind of arch my back and lean back and they were like pretty intense i was like low moaning through them breathing through them in the front seat yeah in the front seat the back seat had

TRACI BURK: our two car seats so there was a little bit more room in the front so as we're driving it says 48 minutes to the hospital my husband's definitely in the carpool lane going kind of as fast as he can we have like spa music playing and i'm just kind of focusing on like what i had practiced with the breathing and really trying to be zen through all of it are you making noises i was yeah i was making like low kind of moans i think it was starting to freak my husband out because i wasn't really making any noises at home but as soon as we got in the car it was like as soon as i shut the door and kind of waved at my son my body just was like okay it's go time wow okay um about 10 minutes from the hospital i'm like oh my gosh

TRACI BURK: i feel like i am pushing or i have to poop i'm like oh you feel the pressure yes yeah it was it's starting really intense like the next contraction after that i started feeling the fetal ejection like reflex where i'm like pushing like my body's pushing So my husband, he's running red lights. He's making sure nobody's coming, but he's running red lights. We're going as fast as we can. We're about five minutes from the hospital. At that point, I'm like, I think the baby's gonna be born in the car. And

I'm like, it's okay if the baby comes in the car. I'm just trying to really relax. And he's like, you're right, it's fine. We pull up the hospital to pull up the parking garage and our car is an inch too tall

TRACI BURK: to fit under the bar that goes into the parking garage. So yeah, PSA to anybody who has the same vehicle as us. We have a 2023 Land Rover Defender. It does not fit in the Cedars parking garage.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But you figured it out. You didn't like rush in there and scrape your roof, did you?

TRACI BURK: No, we didn't.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You just saw the sign.

TRACI BURK: Yeah, he hopped out and realized it was not gonna fit. So we had to back out. We found a parking lot across the street, like an above air, open air parking lot.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Right, so I mean, most people don't know this hospital, which is there is a parking lot that goes right into the building itself. And you could just jump into an elevator up to labor and delivery from there. But the other parking lots are not in the building and they're usually, yeah, a little bit of a walk.

TRACI BURK: Yeah, so this one was a kind of across the street. I'm just like, great, what else can happen? Like it's for sure happening in the car, but we park and I'm really trying not to push. Like each contraction, I'm just trying to like breathe and almost trying to like fight the reflex to push. So we park, we leave the bags, of course, he kind of grabs my hand and we cross the street. Luckily there's a doctor exiting kind of where the ambulance area is. As we're coming in, he sees us, he ran inside and got a wheelchair. And so we came out with a wheelchair, wheeled me into the front desk. They could tell right away that I'm like pushing, basically they ask if it's my first or second birth. When I say it's my second, they were like, skip triage.

TRACI BURK: They didn't ask me any questions. They didn't ask for my ID or anything. We skipped triage and went right up to labor and delivery. It turns out it was really busy that day. There was no like regular rooms in labor and delivery. So we were on like a different floor that they keep for like overflow rooms. Yeah. So they bring me in there. It was a big room. It looked very similar to what we were in with my first birth. There's a midwife there and she was like, okay, let's get you on the bed and check you. So I kind of remove everything. I'm wearing a dress. I remove everything. At this point I have a ton of bloody show. So I'm like, okay, this is definitely go time. I must be like, definitely at this point, like about to have a baby.

TRACI BURK: She checks me and I'm like almost 10 centimeters. I'm nine and a half centimeters. She said I had a tiny little lip left. So she checked me and then she asked if my water had broken. I told her no. The second I said no, I had an explosive water break. We all kind of laugh like, okay, now it has. They call the doctor after that. I think I had like a minute. It seemed like my contractions kind of spaced out to about two minutes at that point. They were coming every minute before that. At this point, once I'm on the bed, it's like every two minutes, they call the on-call doctor to come.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Two thoughts. One is, cause you said that before you got in the car, they were super mellow and you're like, oh, we're gonna get there too early. You closed the car door and they picked up. And as you got close, 10 minutes away or so, they picked up even more and you had the rectal pressure. But was any of this contraction wise, was it like overpowering?

TRACI BURK: No, it definitely got more and more intense. And I'm like using everything that I had to learn from like the deep moaning and the breathing, but nothing compared to my first birth, nothing compared to pitocin contraction. And I kind of recall everything. Like my body took over, but I also feel like my mind was pretty clear with everything and it wasn't anything that I couldn't handle.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay, so great. And then my second question was, when your water broke, did the sensation of the surges change at all? Did your contractions feel different?

TRACI BURK: Yeah, so the next contraction after my water broke, it was like push time. I just felt like you could see my stomach. I'm like wearing nothing at this point. I had taken off my dress. They asked if I wanted a hospital gown. I said, no, because I had my own gown that I had wanted to wear that was in my luggage, which we didn't have with us at the time. It was still in the car. And you could see my stomach was from the top, just pushing the baby down.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Meaning not you pushing, just the waves like your uterus was bringing your baby out.

TRACI BURK: And I had read previously about the kind of the idea of breathing out your baby and not really pushing, just letting your body do the work and just breathing it out. And I had that in my head. So I was just focusing on breathing and relaxing and letting my body do it.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: What position are you in?

TRACI BURK: I'm on my back, which is not what I had intended. I had wanted to kind of try hands and knees or something different, but it just all happened so fast that I didn't even have time to like think to change positions.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But you didn't have a strong urge

TRACI BURK: to change positions either. No, I didn't. I think somebody actually asked me. So my doula too was on her way to the hospital. She literally ran in and got into the room five minutes before the baby was born. And she asked me, do you want to change positions? And I'm like, I can't, I can't move. Like I'm fine here. This is where I want to be. And I just like let my body kind of take over. And I think the baby was born in two contractions of pushing.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow.

TRACI BURK: or no coaching? Just what? No coaching. Just on your own. No coaching at all. The on-call doctor was really amazing. The midwife is amazing. The nurses, nobody really talked. My doula made it just on time. We had some music playing. She had her camera. It was actually- Oh, you got pictures. She's a photography doula. Yes. I haven't got them back yet, but I'll definitely send you some.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Ah, wow. That's incredible. How long were you at the hospital from the time that doctors got you a wheelchair until you were holding the baby?

TRACI BURK: About 25 minutes. Wow. From the time we first opened the door until the baby was born, yeah. That was like our second baby also. It was wild. The whole time, it couldn't have been more perfect, but it was also shocking. I think it took me a while to really process how quickly that all happened. But now you had the baby come through you, unmedicated in the sense that no artificial meds, just whatever you made internally. We actually didn't even do a headlock or any sort of IV. There was no time for it.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You liked that? That's what you wanted.

TRACI BURK: Yeah. I didn't even want the port to be put in, so I had nothing.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But in terms of the baby coming through last time, I don't know how much of an epidural you still had left by the time you were pushing, but in this sense, no external medication. What did it feel like when the baby came through you?

TRACI BURK: It felt like relief. It felt like something had to come out and it was relieving. I actually held her because I wasn't helping along with pushing. I was just like, my body do it. I have a video on my phone actually that my doula had recorded as well, and I held her at the crowning position, which is the doctor had mentioned to try to go slow at this point to avoid any tearing. I held her there in between contractions, and then she was fully born the next push. I think the crowning is where you would normally feel the ring of fire. I remember thinking in my head, when am I going to feel the ring of fire? Is this it? And I never really noticed it. Oh, wow. Yeah, I don't know if it wasn't anything.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I mean, it sounds like you're saying mostly relief during your pushing.

TRACI BURK: Mostly relief, yeah. It was intense, but relief.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow. What a crazy scene. Amazing. Okay. You had a couple of interesting twists, as we mentioned in the opening. First, you got a false positive that the baby might have Turner syndrome. You ended up doing an amnio, right?

TRACI BURK: Correct.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And then that ruled out, no, the baby didn't have Turner syndrome. Then you did an infection test. You tested for infections because there was a weird looking spot. Is that

TRACI BURK: why you did the infection tests? Yeah, there was just a bright spot that they weren't too sure about on the ultrasound, so I did a test to rule out any infection, and it came back positive for-

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Toxoplasmosis. But then it wasn't toxoplasmosis, but there was still this unexplained spot, and in the end, they said, our best guess is someone who will be susceptible to kidney stones in their life. But all of that scare, okay, scare, okay, scare. But for those things, you were thinking about doing a home birth. But then you said, well, I'm going to just try to have the most homey-like hospital birth. Yeah, and that's exactly how it turned out. It

TRACI BURK: couldn't have been more intervention-free. And even after the baby was born, we waited until the cords finished pulsing, which was pretty quick, about a minute and a half. My husband cut the cord, and then they gave us about an hour and a half, maybe almost two hours of skin-to-skin, the golden hour before taking the baby for measurements. So it was kind of really magical. That's so great. Yeah. And then they were, like I mentioned, overflow in the labor and delivery. So they actually didn't have a room in postpartum for us until about midnight. The baby was born at 451 in the afternoon. So we ended up staying in the big labor and delivery room until midnight, until a room opened up in the postpartum ward.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: All right. Let's take another break, and then I have some postpartum questions for you. We'll be right back. Welcome back. We're talking to Supermom, Gracie Burke, I think, speed award for fastest birth ever, maybe. So from, like, the first time you felt those weird castor oil contractions, maybe, maybe it was the castor oil.

TRACI BURK: I will say to anyone considering castor oil that I did not have any digestive issues. I

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: had no nausea, no diarrhea, no vomiting. I was going to ask, but you did the three quarters of a tablespoon. We should publish your recipe. I know I should. Yeah. Okay. So you have seemingly all the benefits and none of the downsides. It's also good to sort of, whenever you start having surges, be, you know, a very effaced cervix that's also already dilating, a couple centimeters dilated. Okay. Very fast birth. I remember you saying last time that the baby wouldn't latch in the hospital. And then you eventually worked it out. How is latching and feeding this time?

TRACI BURK: Yeah, it was good. So she actually took probably about 30 minutes to latch. We just kind of like bonded. She had no interest in latching for about 30 minutes. After that, she did latch and we've been exclusively breastfeeding since day one.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: How was the meeting of your toddler and newborn?

TRACI BURK: It was great. So we got him a couple of gifts from her, a guitar and a vacuum, a little toy vacuum. He loves our vacuum cleaner and he loves music. It was from her. So he was really excited about that. We kept her in the car seat, which we'd heard instead of holding her, to keep her in the car seat so it's more neutral territory. He was really excited. I was kind of on cloud nine for the first couple of days. He did turn into a little bit of a tear after that for a few days. A little bit more needy than normal, a little bit more whiny, but he's back on track with just being excited about her and back to his normal self now.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And how's it for you? I mean, it's less than two weeks in, but sort of having responsibility for a toddler and a newborn.

TRACI BURK: I'm definitely a little bit more tired than the first time around.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You don't sound it at all and you don't look it. People can't see you, but it looks like you're talking about something that happened months ago.

TRACI BURK: Okay, good. I guess I pulled off well. So I'm definitely having less sleep than before for sure. It takes a lot more time to get things done around the house. It's definitely a lot more

challenging with a toddler. He's almost more work than the newborn. So it's a lot.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, the newborn just stays wherever you put them.

TRACI BURK: Yeah. She doesn't have a huge appetite though, whereas my son, he would eat for like 45 minutes and then he would be good for three hours. She will nurse for maybe 10 minutes and then she'll be hungry an hour later. So she's doing a lot of cluster feeding during the day. So I'm doing a lot of nursing during the day. She's a pretty good night sleeper, but we're nursing, it seems like almost constantly since she's been born during the day.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: How is your physical recovery this time versus last time?

TRACI BURK: It's been amazing compared to the first time. First time wasn't really too bad at all, but recovering from the epidural and kind of the IV and everything that was put in me and just being very swollen and sore. This time around, I was up going to the bathroom like an hour later and walking around. I felt like I was ready to go for a walk around the block like a couple of days in, I feel great.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow.

TRACI BURK: I did have a tiny tear that I think they put three sutures in and she did say it was optional if I wanted them or not. I said to go for it. So I did end up getting three sutures, whereas the last time I did it, I'm guessing it was because it was just such a quick delivery. My daughter was the same size, same weight as my son. So same size baby exactly.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: What was the weight?

TRACI BURK: Seven pounds, four ounces. Oh, so perfect.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And length?

TRACI BURK: She was 20 inches. My son was 21 and a half.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And both after 41 weeks.

TRACI BURK: Son was 40 weeks, three days, and she was 41 weeks.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay, so just a few days apart.

TRACI BURK: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, I don't know if you're gonna have a third one, but with everything you learned from the first two, would you do anything differently if you had another one?

TRACI BURK: If we were to have another one, just given how quickly everything went, I would definitely do a home birth or switch hospitals to a closer hospital.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Something very close to you.

TRACI BURK: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And is there any diagnostic, did they do any further diagnostics with whatever that bright spot was? Is there anything to do?

TRACI BURK: Yeah, so she's been perfectly healthy with everything, like all the standard testing they do. She's doing amazing and completely normal. The testing for the predisposition for kidney stones, it's just a saliva test. So I do plan to get that done sometime in the next month or two, but it's not urgent. If she does have the kidney stones, it's not something that would typically affect her until she's a teenager or an adult. We will look into it, but the doctor did say that it could be nothing as well. So we're not super concerned about it, but I will let you know once you find out.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay, but there's nothing to worry about.

TRACI BURK: No.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So are those the two options? Like either it's just this thing that predisposes you to kidney stones or it's nothing?

TRACI BURK: Yeah, that's what I was told because it was just a variation of normal, is what he said.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I'm pretty sure I am a variation of normal. I'm the ultrasound. Not because I'm bright, just different.

TRACI BURK: I said she was super healthy. I'm just very relieved. It was a somewhat stressful pregnancy with all those false positive tests, but just having her here, being so healthy and so perfect, I couldn't be happier.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I'm so happy for you. What a beautiful story, and couldn't happen to a nicer person and also someone who kind of worked hard for it. You did a lot to prepare your mind and your body.

TRACI BURK: Thank you. Yeah, I would definitely have a doula again. We didn't the first time, even though we didn't use any of the positions we practiced or any of that. It was still just amazing having her there and can't wait to see the photos and just having her support beforehand and after as well. So I definitely recommend a doula for anyone who's planning to try to go unmedicated. Awesome. Well, any final thoughts before we sign off? Just thank you for everything, for all the adjustments. I think you probably had a big part in how quickly everything happened, too, making sure I was aligned and ready to go.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I did my tiny piece. Well, Tracy, thank you for sharing your story. And I know that you listen to the podcast also and got to benefit from other people sharing their stories. And that's why it was important for you to come share yours. And I really appreciate it. I am so happy for you that you had the birth that you wanted. And especially after all that drama and all those different suspenseful moments during pregnancy that you had a really picture perfect birth. When you were telling the story, I thought for sure you were going to say we made it one block from Cedars and the baby came out in the car. And then when you couldn't park, you know, I was like, oh, no, now what? I thought that was for sure happening to you.

TRACI BURK: I was completely prepared. I made sure there was nothing on the floor in front of me and I was prepared to just push around the car.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It's interesting that that wasn't concerning to either of you, that that was a real possibility at that moment.

TRACI BURK: I'm sure my husband was freaking out, but he knew that he couldn't say anything to stress me out. So and I think I was so far in at that point that my body had taken over and I was just like, my body just needs to get this baby out.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Right. All the people that I know and I know several that gave birth in the car by accident on the way to the hospital. It was not like a scary time for them. I think the anxiety part of birth is mostly the labor. I think so, too. When you're just giving birth in your car, you know, I don't know. It seems like you said nature kicks in. Your hard wiring kicks in. Your body somehow knows exactly what to do.

TRACI BURK: And you just kind of let go of all control. And the feeling of like your body taking over was so amazing. I didn't have that before. And just like having my body like eject the baby and just like feeling her move through me was like something that I don't even know how to describe it. But it was such a cool feeling like knowing that this person that you grew, just feeling her come out. It just feels like so profound.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It does feel like you climbed a mountain afterwards. Yes, it's never no matter how long I do this for, it never gets old. How insane it is that your body takes two microscopic cells and builds a full human from it and delivers that baby through your body into the world. And that breastfeeding works is like mind boggling. The whole situation is insane. But it's like a beautiful, miraculous thing to be a part of. And I don't know. I've said this on the podcast before when I was 10 or 11 years old and I realized where babies come from. I'm like, oh, goodness. Thankfully, I'm a dude and I don't have to do that. But then after all these years, it's sort of like, ah, crap, I'm a dude. I never get to do that.

TRACI BURK: Yeah, it's pretty amazing. But even just for all the men out there supporting their partners, I think it's probably pretty profound for them as well. And they play a huge role.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Totally. My one tip for you, if you have the next baby and you're that close to delivering when you realize your car doesn't fit in the garage, just go park around by emergency.

TRACI BURK: You know, afterwards, I'm like, we should have just drove into where the ambulances go in.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, that's what I'm saying. They have a little parking lot there too. OK, back to your full time job now, managing a newborn and a toddler. But thank you so much for sharing your beautiful story. We're going to post it with some pictures on Instagram at home. Thanks for listening to our podcast. For more pregnancy and parenting information, including blog, podcast and all new streaming service, visit informedpregnancy.com.

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